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RURAL AREAS
DEVELOPMENT

RA NEWSLETTER

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JUN 13 1969

CURRENT SERIAL RECORDS

March 1969

No. 100

CONSERVATIONIST USES NEW TOOL FOR DEVELOPMENT OF LAND

A district conservationist near Washington, D.C. has developed a new tool for conservation-oriented development of land for urban purposes. District Conservationist Glenn Anderson of the Soil Conservation Service, who assists the Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District, calls this tool a "soils-slopes" map.

A modification of traditional soils maps used in agricultural planning, the soils-slopes maps and their associated data sheets analyze the physical limitations of the soils of a given tract and incorporate judgment factors involving the natural features of the land, including streams and woods.

These soils-slopes maps are prepared upon request of public agencies or a cooperating land owner who contemplates development.

It is not the objective of the Soil and Water Conservation District or the Soil Conservation Service to become involved in the zoning process, but rather to provide information and assistance that will help local officials make sound decisions concerning land use proposals.

A professional engineering firm can use the maps, data and associated recommendations made by the Soil Conservation Service specialists and develop a plan which utilizes the land appropriately. Stream valleys, steep or wooded areas, and locations with unusually attractive topographic features can sometimes be developed to a limited extent or can be worked into the open space or recreation facet of the community. Moderately suitable areas can be developed to a variety of uses. Suitable areas can be developed more intensively with a minimum of conservation practices involved.

One developer, after receiving his map, took another hike through his property with "a new perspective", returned to his office and completely modified his plans.

Sample soil maps may be obtained without charge by writing:

Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District
9638 Lee Highway
Fairfax, Virginia 22030

STATES BEAR RESPONSIBILITY FOR LOCAL PLANNING GRANTS

Under a new policy of the Department of Housing and Urban Development, state planning or other designated state agencies will bear principal responsibility for the administration of planning assistance for non-metropolitan multi-county districts. This is an extension of their existing authority over planning grants for small cities and counties.

Recently representatives of HUD, the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Economic Development Administration met in six HUD regional headquarters to discuss the administration of such assistance programs. Meetings in Atlanta, San Francisco, Chicago, New York, Fort Worth and Philadelphia drew HUD Washington and regional personnel, EDA personnel and representatives of the Extension Service, the Farmers Home Administration, the Forest Service and the Soil Conservation Service.

One afternoon of each two-day meeting was devoted entirely to the role of USDA and the states in non-metropolitan district planning.

HUD, USDA and EDA are currently engaged in working out a pattern for interagency relationships in support of the state and district programs.

Indications are 18 state agencies plan to apply for funds to advance planning on a multi-county rural district basis within the next few months.

DEVELOPMENT OF HUNTING GROUNDS PAYS OFF IN WISCONSIN

Some 25 hunters from neighboring Fox River Valley pay Harold Van Stratens of Shiocton, Wisconsin \$200 a year apiece for the duck hunting rights on the farm owned by him and his brother Dale. The Van Stratens grow muskrats, wild ducks, corn and soybeans all on the same farm and find it a profitable combination. As cooperators with the Outagamie Soil and Water Conservation District, the Van Stratens have improved their wildlife land by constructing several miles of level ditches and 11 ponds.

When Harold Van Stratens started selling hunting rights, he charged only \$3 a person for a season and allowed as many as 200 hunters to use the area. He soon found that this many hunters "burned out" the birds. Twenty-five hunters with the present bag limits seems to be about right.

The Van Stratens story and others are featured in the March issue of Soil Conservation, devoted to wildlife conservation. A limited number of single copies are available through the RAD Newsletter.

"HUMANE ENVIRONMENT" GOAL OF NEW CENTER

While the immediate attention of the new Urban Affairs Center of the American Institute of Architects will be directed to the inner city, its director, Ralph G. Schwarz, states that in the long-run, the Center will be concerned "with the total problem of achieving the 'humane environment,' whether urban or rural, suburban or inner city."

REMOTE SENSING CONSIDERED FOR PLANNING PURPOSES

The state of the art of remote sensing as a tool for urban planners is not advanced far enough to measure its total effectiveness, speakers indicated at this month's annual meeting of the American Society of Photogrammetry in Washington.

Because of articles in the popular press, planners are being bombarded by the consumer, Joseph M. Prochaska, associate professor in the graduate school of planning at the University of Tennessee, said. While remote sensing has seen its greatest applications in the fields of agriculture and forestry, he said, planners must consider many more facts besides those offered by remote sensing.

When one looks at the complexity of the urban system, Prochaska said, one cannot mount sidelooking radar on a vehicle in the sky and expect to come out with anything more than a whisper about the urban needs of this generation.

"That's not being negative," he said, "That's being realistic."

At the same time Dr. Robert W. Peplies, chairman of the department of geography at East Tennessee State University, reported that experiments conducted with infrared and other color photography in Western North Carolina suggested that identification of low-income producing farms with these tools can help rural resource planners focus attention on the areas where help is needed and also provide areas such as the southern Appalachians with equitable resource allocations.

COMMUNITY BULLETIN BOARDS

Bulletin boards built by the local Soil and Water Conservation District and sporting the latest information about Federal agricultural and state conservation programs have been placed in several rural stores in Northeast Minnesota. This pegboard, program-to-people project is maintained by personnel of the Soil Conservation Service, Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, Farmers Home Administration, and the Division of Lands and Forestry of the Minnesota Conservation Department.

STUDY SHOWS WHAT RECREATION COULD DO IN GEORGIA COUNTY

A \$36,000 study of Towns County, Georgia shows that optimum development of the county's resources for recreation purposes could add \$2,885,700 in capital assets to the county tax rolls and generate from \$715,000 of tourist expenditures in the early stages of market development to \$1 million as operating procedures mature.

Development of the recommended projects would create 145 jobs, 42 of which would be year-round employment, according to the study, conducted by Mrs. Virginia Keyser.

Some 259,000 people with an aggregate purchasing power of \$390 million live within 50 miles of the proposed recreation development site.

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SPECIAL IMPACT FUNDS WORKING IN NORTH CAROLINA, KENTUCKY

Community facility construction and a labor availability survey are highlights of activities underway in two four-county special impact areas designated in mid-1968 for North Carolina and Kentucky.

With funds from the Office of Economic Opportunity and liaison services provided by the Farmers Home Administration, the special impact areas are the counties of Hoke, Bladen, Robeson and Columbus in North Carolina and the counties of Letcher, Leslie, Perry and Knott in Kentucky.

In the North Carolina area, new industrial parks equipped with modern water and sewage systems are being launched with the aid of grants from a \$1.3 million special impact fund. It is calculated that every dollar invested by the special impact fund will be matched by \$66 from other sources in construction, employment and other benefits to the area.

After a special impact grant was allocated to upgrade the existing baseball park to professional baseball standards so that a Minnesota Twins minor league farm club could locate there, citizens then collected enough funds to build a new Little League baseball park.

Leadership in the North Carolina project area is provided by Advancement, Inc., headquartered at Lumberton, N.C.

In the Kentucky River Development District, a shoe manufacturer considering location there conducted a survey to test the availability of labor. It received more than 3,000 applications from residents of the four county area.

The Whitesburg-Letcher County Industrial Development Foundation is negotiating with the shoe manufacturer to locate the plant, which ultimately would hire 500 persons, on a new industrial park site near Whitesburg. The site would be developed with special impact funds.